

Constructive vs. destructive ways of coping with stress in times of global health crisis – an interactive approach

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The last few years have seen the occurrence of a major global health crisis, mainly due to the multifaceted consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic in the realm of physical and mental health. This has left most people confused and unprepared to cope with the stressful unpredictability of their life and future events. Systematic psychological reviews and meta-analyses of current studies show that the global health crisis, besides having economic (e.g., lockdown, loss of work) and social consequences (e.g., quarantine, social distancing, isolation, loneliness), has had detrimental ramifications on mental health. The current paper will examine constructive vs. destructive ways of coping with stress and its consequences to health behaviors. An interaction paradigm will be used, within which the relationships among the perceptive factors (e.g. threat appraisal, fear of potential danger), personal resources (e.g. resilience, meaning in life) and coping strategies will be examined in terms of their consequences for health behavior. The identification of pathways (coping strategies and comprehension of challenging life events) through which global health crisis affects mental health outcomes may contribute to understanding further the indirect relationships between disease-related factors and health behaviors.

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